# RULES AND ORDERS,

IN SEVERAL

# ARTICLES,

TO BE OBSERVED BY

## *THE COMMUNITY*

OF

## WORKHOUSE PREACHERS

At the Weſt End of the Town,

CORRECTED AND REVISED.

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*Bleſſed is the Man that conſidereth the Poor, the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble.* Pſal. xli. 1.

*For ye have the Poor always with you.* Mat. xxvi. 11.

*I was ſick, and ye viſited me.* Matt. xxv. 36.

*Pure religion and undefiled before God, and the Father is this, To viſit the fatherleſs and widows in their affliction, and to keep himſelf unſpotted from the world.* Jam. i. 27.

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# INTRODUCTION.

A Collective Body of Men, compounded of various paſſions and inclinations, where there is no regulation previouſly agreed to, but each left at liberty to act as the impulſe of the moment might ſuggeſt, however good their intentions and laudable their undertakings, have, by their continual miſunderſtandings and diſſentions, exhibited a Babel of confuſion and ſeparation, and generally defeated their own deſigns; but, as order, union, ſtability, and ſucceſs, in edifying the Church of Chriſt, are only, with God's bleſſing, to be expected from the due obſervance of laws, the preſent Members, compoſing the Community, have agreed in compiling the following Articles, which, after mature deliberation and experience, appear beſt adapted to the exigencies of time, place, perſon, and circumſtances, the end being ſimply the Glory of God and good of Men: We, therefore, individually, and as a general body at large, ſubſcribe to be conformable to the laws, and their reſpective arrangements, to be directed thereby in our future endeavours to ſpread the Goſpel of our Redeemer, on whoſe divine aid and promiſe we ſolely depend for every bleſſing, witneſſing againſt, and renouncing the vain ſpirit and cuſtoms of the World, and, as Men of God, we determine to flee theſe things, taking

up our Croſs and following Jeſus the Lord. Any Brethren, truly alive in their own ſouls, having the love of God and a tender concern for their neighbours at heart, able and willing to further the work, or join with us in this labour of love, we wiſh to give the right-hand of Fellowſhip; but men of ſiniſter diſpoſitions will meet with no encouragement among us to ſatisfy ſelfiſh views.—Should our Articles be thought too difficult or ſevere, we only deſire every Candidate well to examine himſelf well and count the coſt. We pray the Lord, who has called us out of darkneſs into his marvellous light, who has bleſſed and united us in love, to keep us from any one, that, with wrong motives, might either diſturb our union or hinder our ſucceſs.

May the Law of our God be wrote on our hearts, and, as an immoveable key ſtone to our fabric, ſtrengthen us together in the ſacred Bonds of Peace and Social Affection.

RULES

# RULES AND ARTICLES

OF THE

## *COMMUNITY*

OF

## WORKHOUSE PREACHERS.

### *Article I. Of Meeting, Time, and Place.*

1ſt, THAT the Community meet at Saffron-Hill Chapel every Sabbath morning at half paſt ten o'clock; after Divine Service the plan of Appointments be read, and each Member receive his engagement as circumſtances may require.

2dly, That they ſhall meet at the place appointed on Monday evenings, for the purpoſe of hearing and judging trial and admiſſion Sermons.

3dly, That at the concluſion of every quarter the buſineſs of the Community ſhall be audited, Officers choſen, the conduct of each Member examined, Candidates admitted, appeals heard, new places propoſed, &c.

4thly, That at the half quarter, on Sunday evening, a love feaſt ſhall be held at Weſt-Street Chapel, and a collection made.

## *Article II. Of Admiſſions and Qualifications of Candidates.*

*Clauſe* I. In order to admiſſion, the Candidate muſt be a Member of the late Rev. Mr. Weſley's Society, bring a note of recommendation from his Claſs Leader, give a clear account of his converſion, evidencing the ſame by a holy life, &c.

*Clauſe* II. He is further required to have ſome giſt in prayer and exhortation, and clearly anſwer to the following interrogatories:

*Clauſe* III. Queſtion 1. With what Religious Society are you at this time connected?

2. What is your motive for offering yourſelf as a Candidate?

3. What do you believe concerning the doctrine of the Trinity?

4. What is your ideas of Man in his original ſtate?

5. What is Man in his preſent State?

6. How did Sin and Miſery enter into the World?

7. By what means can Man recover the forfeited favour and image of God, and his original rectitude?

8. How extenſive did God deſign his ſalvation ſhould be?

9. Is it poſſible, a Soul that has been a partaker of the grace of God ſhould fall away and periſh?

10. Do you intend cordially to ſubmit to our diſcipline, conſtantly and faithfully to attend the places appointed you by the Committee, and, in conſequence of mature deliberation, counting the coſt, &c. do you now offer yourſelf as a Candidate for the Miniſtry to the Community?

The above queſtions are expected to be anſwered in ſome degree of clearneſs.

*Clauſe*

*Clauſe* IV. That theſe queſtions being anſwered to the ſatisfaction of the Community, the Candidate ſhall ſign his name in a book for the purpoſe, as a confirmation to himſelf and to the Community; and may the Lord of the Harveſt fit, ſtrengthen, and ſupport him in the fulfilment of this moſt ſolemn engagement, for the intereſt of the Church Militant, and for the Glory of Jeſus Chriſt.

*Clauſe* V. He muſt attend the Workhouſes one quarter previous to his admiſſion, during which time he ſhall ſpeak from a text of Scripture, or deliver his ideas on the leading doctrines of Chriſtianity extemporary before the Community at the place appointed, who ſhall decide upon his talents by a majority, and appoint his ſtation accordingly.

*Clauſe* VI. Being admitted and ſtationed by a majority, it is required of him to be diligent in the uſe of all means of improvement, cordially ſubmit to our diſcipline, conſciouſly attend his appointments with a ſingle view to the glory of God, and the good of immortal and precious Souls.

*Clauſe* VII. If after the firſt quarter he ſhall require it, or if the Community judge expedient, an opportunity ſhall be allowed for his making further proof of his abilities by preaching before them, ſtill abiding by their deciſion.

*Clauſe* VIII. He ſhall remain two years on trial, when, on full and clear evidence to the ſatisfaction of a majority of the Community, he ſhall be fully admitted, and become a Free Member.

## *Article III. Of Characters and Duty.*

*Clauſe* I. That there ſhall be three diſtinct claſſes—Preachers, Exhorters, and Viſitors.

*Of*

## *Of Preachers and Duty.*

*Clauſe* II. The gifts and graces of each Preacher being approved of, he is required to make good progreſs in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, having his ſenſes and heart exerciſed therein above the common ſort of believers, earneſtly ſeeking the illumination of God's Holy Spirit, and other gifts of edification, by meditation, prayer, and by every poſſible method to prepare in private for Public Miniſtry.

*Clauſe* III. That he perform his duty faithfully, wiſely, with becoming gravity, and loving affection; in doctrine adhering ſtrictly to what is commonly believed among us, and that his tenets, when neceſſary, be ſubmitted to trial by the Community, who ſhall judge according to the principles of the late Rev. Mr. Weſley.

## *Article IV. Of Exhorters and Duty.*

*Clauſe* I. That Exhorters ſhall attend the Workhouſes according to their appointments, but ſhall not be ſo confined thereby, but that they may viſit as many wards as circumſtances will admit; the time of continuance in each ward ſhall be proportioned to the number and ſituation of the patients, not exceeding half an hour in each ward.

*Clauſe* II. As the ſituation of the patients admit, he ſhall either exhort, read a chapter in the Bible, expound or otherwiſe inſtruct, the whole together or ſeparate, particularly if any are in dying circumſtances, or any ſolicit his attendance.

*Clauſe* III. He ſhall not preach from a text, but confine himſelf to general exhortation; but previous to his trial ſermon, by application to the Steward, ſhall be appointed to a proper place for the purpoſe of making trial of his intended ſubject.

*Article*

## *Article V. Of Viſitors and Duty.*

*Clauſe* I. Every Candidate propoſed and admitted on trial is conſidered a Viſitor.

*Clauſe* II. That the Viſitors ſhall attend the Preachers to the different places of appointment, aſſiſt in ſinging, then proceed to every poſſible part of the Workhouſe, perſuading and exhorting the people in health to attend the public preaching, reaſon with oppoſers with all perſeverance, anſwering their objections as far as poſſible; the ſick, lame, and ſuch as cannot attend, he is to inſtruct them, and conclude with prayer.

*Clauſe* III. That he be at the diſpoſal of the Steward then being, to have no voice in voting but by permiſſion, that he humbly incline to keep our Articles, and obey in the Spirit of a Chriſtian.

## *Article VI. Of Officers, &c.*

*Clauſe* I. That the Community be governed by their Articles, but in peculiar caſes, where the Articles may not be thought competent, the appeal muſt be to the Community, when a majority of Free Members ſhall finally decide.

*Clauſe* II. That its Officers conſiſt of a Preſident, Secretary, Steward, and a Committee.

## *Article VII. Of the Mode of Electing Officers, and their Time of Continuance.*

*Clauſe* I. That all Officers be choſen from the Preachers Claſs.

*Clauſe* II. That the Steward going out of office, ſhall, for the offices of Steward and Secretary, nominate

minate two names for each office, which, being marked by each Member, the Steward ſhall declare in whoſe favour the majority is found.

*Clauſe* III. That the Committee ſhall conſiſt of five, the Steward, Secretary, and three others, choſen by writing the names of proper perſons on ſeparate billets; the perſons drawn ſhall be declared duly elected.

*Clauſe* IV. The Preſident to be elected at every general meeting by a majority; the Secretary to be in office for half a year, who may be re-elected, or a proper perſon in his ſtead; the Steward for one quarter; the Committee only during making the plan.

## *Article VIII. Of the Duty of Officers.*

*Clauſe* I. OF THE DUTY OF THE PRESIDENT. That the Preſident ſhall begin each meeting with prayer, and, by a proper ſtatement, inform the Members the reaſons of their being called together; each Member ſpeaking to the buſineſs ſhall ſtand up, and ſpeak to the point; in caſe of derogation ſhall be called to order by the Preſident, who ſhall conclude the meeting a quarter before ten o'clock with prayer.

*Clauſe* II. OF THE SECRETARY. That the duty of the Secretary ſhall be punctually to execute the writing buſineſs, keeping the accompts which ſhall be given in at every quarterly meeting, keeping a diſtinct account of the proceedings of each meeting by proper minutes; he ſhall provide bread for love feaſts, pens, ink, paper, and every other requiſite at the Community's expence; he ſhall examine Candidates for admiſſion by the article provided for that purpoſe—(*Art. II.*) &c. &c.

*Clauſe*

*Clauſe* III. OF THE DUTY OF THE STEWARD. That the Steward coming into office conclude the quarterly meeting with prayer; that he read the plan every Sabbath at the place appointed, diſtinctly calling over the appointments of the laſt Sabbath, particularly noting omiſſions, uſing all proper means to call the Member to his duty; he ſhall report ſuch conduct at the quarterly meeting, when a defence will be heard by the Community, and the caſe decided by article; he ſhall zealouſly endeavour that all the places may be properly ſupplied, and ſuch other buſineſs as may occaſionally occur for the Glory of God, the good of Immortal Souls, and welfare of the Community in general.

*Clauſe* IV. THE DUTY OF THE COMMITTEE. That the Committee attend at the time and place appointed, for the purpoſe of making the general plan of appointments for one quarter; that they appoint each Claſs to their reſpective labours, accommodating each Member with a diſtinct plan of his own appointments, from whoſe deciſion there ſhall be no appeal, but to the Community at the quarterly meeting. The particular plans ſhall be delivered to each Member the Sabbath Day previous to the expiration of the former.

## *Article IX. Of Suſpenſion and Excluſion.*

*Clauſe* I. That any Member not able to attend his appointments ſhall give the earlieſt notice to the Steward, and for a Sabbath Day no excuſe ſhall be admitted, but that of ſickneſs or neceſſary diſtance.

*Clauſe* II. That ſhould any Member be found to neglect his appointment, he ſhall, for the firſt offence, be liable to the cenſure of the Community, the ſecond time ſuſpenſion, and the third time excluſion.

*Clauſe*

*Clauſe* III. Any member neglecting to take up his Society Ticket, in due time, ſhall be ſuſpended, and the ſecond time expelled.

*Clauſe* IV. That ſhould any Member be found circulating the internal buſineſs of the Community, he ſhall, for the firſt time, receive cenſure, and for the ſecond time expulſion.

## *Article X. For Enlarging the Work.*

As this Community are agreed to extend their labours, when any new place has been procured by any individual, he ſhall announce the ſame, with the circumſtances, &c. to the Community, for their conſideration and determination.

## *Article XI. Of Re-admiſſion.*

As from various cauſes ſeveral Members have been obliged for a time to ſeparate from us, it is agreed, that when the cauſe is removed to the ſatisfaction of the Community, the old Member ſhall be reſtored to his former ſtation, and excuſed the form propoſed to Candidates.

*The Grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghoſt, be with us all.* AMEN.

THE END.